

## South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC)

13<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Cook Islands

25 - 27 February 2015

### IHB Report

#### Status of Approval of Amendments to the IHO Convention

1. Amendments to the Convention on the IHO were approved by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference in May 2005. By January 2015, 41 of the required 48 approvals to the Protocol of Amendments had been received by the Government of Monaco. The following IHO Member States of the SWPHC have not yet indicated positive support for the Protocol of Amendments:

No response as yet from:
Fiji
Tonga

2. The amendments to the Convention will enter force three months after the necessary majority of approvals is received by the Government of Monaco. If the required number of approvals are received in the next two years, then the first Assembly of the IHO will be held in 2017.

3. The Directing Committee, in cooperation with the Department of External Relations of the Government of Monaco, stands ready to assist, through diplomatic or other channels, those States' representatives that may be encountering difficulties in progressing the outstanding approvals of the Amendments to the Convention.

#### Status of Approval of New Member States of the IHO

4. IHO membership stands at 82. Brunei Darussalam, Georgia and Viet Nam have recently achieved the required number of approvals to become Member States of the IHO subject to the submission of instruments of accession to the Government of Monaco.

5. Bulgaria, Haiti, Mauritania and Sierra Leone have also been approved to become Members of the IHO, but have not yet deposited their instruments of accession with the government of Monaco.

6. There are no applications pending, though a number of coastal States have indicated their intention to apply for membership in the near future.

#### Regional Applications for Membership of the IHO

7. The following countries in the SWPHC/SPC region are not yet Member States of the IHO.

Not Members of the IHO
Cook Islands
Federated States of Micronesia
Kiribati
Marshall Islands
Nauru
Niue
Palau
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tuvalu
Vanuatu

8. The Directing Committee, in cooperation with the Department of External Relations of the Government of Monaco, stands ready to assist, through diplomatic or other channels, those countries in the SWPHC region wishing to become members of the IHO through their respective governments.

#### **INT Chart and ENC Production Coordination - Region L**

9. The latest edition of S-11 Part B for Region L is Edition 2.0.4 dated February 2012. Australia is the Chair of the SWPHC International Charting Coordination Committee for Region L. Since SWPHC-12, it appears that no new INT charts have been published. According to records held by the IHB, in total, 56 INT charts have been published to date, out of 62 charts in the scheme (~ 90 %). The SWPHC, through the Chair of its International Charting Coordination Committee is requested to provide up to date information in order that S-11 Part B for Region L can be kept up to date.

10. The need to improve the current maintenance process for S-11 Part B has been raised on many occasions in several Regional Hydrographic Commissions. Following the development of the regional database for Antarctica, the IHB, with support provided by the Republic of Korea, is commencing specifying an “*INToGIS*” project that will move S-11 part B into an interactive GIS/S-100 compliant environment. The objective of the project is to provide the Regional International Charting Coordination WGs with relevant on-line updated information and the necessary tools to review and maintain INT chart schemes and monitor the implementation of the INT chart schemes. Extending the capability to include ENC schemes/coverage/production is also envisaged in due course. An experimentation of the “*INToGIS*” project involving some of the Regional International Charting Coordinators for comment and feedback is likely to start in March and should involve initially the BSHC, the MBSHC, the HCA, and the USCHC.

#### **5th Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference (EIHC5)**

11. EIHC5 took place from 6 to 10 October in the Auditorium Rainier III in Monaco. 65 of the 82 Member States were represented, together with two pending Member States and 21 representatives from non-Member States, but none from the SWPHC region. The Member States from the SWPHC region attending the Conference were Australia, Fiji, France, New Zealand, UK, and USA. New Zealand provided two very interesting presentations at EIHC5 during the thematic sessions: one on the significance of geospatial data in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the second on the assessment of hydrographic priorities.

12. The Conference acknowledged the need to consider novel ways to supplement hydrographic data gathering, especially in remote and unsurveyed areas. Methods include using satellite derived bathymetry and crowd-sourcing techniques. The Conference was told that the development of national and regional spatial data infrastructures is growing and that national hydrographic services should urgently consider the potential impact on their roles and responsibilities as the world moves from a map and chart-based paradigm to one that places the management and provision of national reference geodata services ahead of map and chart production.

13. The Proceedings for the Conference have been published and are available on the IHO website.

14. In addition to the Industry Exhibition, an IHO Capacity Building exhibition and poster celebration of ten years of Nippon Foundation IHO-IOC GEBCO scholars was arranged. A number of past scholars and alumni provided poster displays of their work since graduation throughout the period of the Conference.

#### **Capacity Building Programme**

15. The SWPHC benefited from various activities under the IHO CB Work Programme for 2014, including one MSI Regional Workshop in New Zealand, a National Hydrographic Capacity Development activity for Solomon Islands, and one IMO/IHO training activity in hydrography and hydrographic governance in Fiji.

16. No candidate from the region was selected for the 2013/2014 Category A Hydrographic Surveying Course at USM due to a lack of certified proficiency in English language. No submissions were received for the 2014/2015 call. The call for nominations for the 2015/2016 course was announced in Circular Letter 65/2014.

17. Within the SWPHC region, only Australia was unsuccessful in being selected for the recently completed Chart Project (Category B Cartography Course at UKHO), sponsored by the Nippon Foundation. The next call for nominations will be announced in February 2015 via Circular Letter.

18. Most Cat A and Cat B training opportunities require proven proficiency in English language. As a result, many applicants are rejected due to a lack of this proficiency. Hydrographic Offices are encouraged to select and prepare suitable candidates for future training opportunities, especially for the Category A hydrography course at USM, where a TOEFL/IELTS certificate is required, together with a GRE score.

19. The success in identifying and obtaining IHO CB opportunities is largely due to the dedication of the SWPHC CB Coordinator – Mr Adam Greenland from New Zealand. Even greater success is likely if SWPHC participating States take an active and collaborative approach to ensuring that appropriate and timely proposals are identified, agreed and forwarded to the IHO Capacity Building Sub Committee for consideration.

### **IHB GIS and Databases**

20. The IHB is evaluating an Esri-based GIS solution. It is anticipated that the C-55, IHO Year Book and other associated databases will be transferred to an Esri environment by Easter 2015. This will enable access to various layers of information through the IHO website and through various sophisticated cloud-based on-line GIS options.

### **Crowd Sourced Bathymetry Programme**

21. EIH5 through Decision 8 directed the IRCC to establish a working group to provide guidelines on the collection and use of crowd-sourced bathymetry. This WG will be established after the IRCC next meets in June in Mexico.

22. Meanwhile, the web-based interface portal to the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry, hosted by the USA in Boulder, Colorado, as part of its commitment to the system of World Data Centres, is being upgraded to be compatible with the crowd-sourced bathymetry concept. The upgrade is expected to be completed by mid-year. This will enable an IHO-led CSB infrastructure to be established and promoted in the IMO and across the wider maritime community.

### **Post-2015 Agendas**

23. The development of the post-2015 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction under the aegis of the United Nations offer an opportunity to highlight the fundamental role of hydrography in underpinning sustainable development and the reduction of marine disaster risks. The Directing Committee is striving to make the best of this opportunity, both directly and through related initiatives and programmes such as the UN initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) and the activities of the Group on Earth Observation (GEO). As the negotiation processes are driven and controlled by Member States, the efforts of the Directing Committee need to be taken forward at the national and regional levels (IHO CL 53/2014 refers).

### **International Hydrographic Review**

24. International Hydrographic Review. The IHR provides an opportunity for Member States to publicise technical and other achievements in the region. An editorial board comprising a representative from each region has been established. The nominated representative for the SWPHC is Mr Bruno Frachon (France).

25. Papers for consideration for publication in the IHR should be forwarded directly to the editor (ihreview@iho.int).

### **IHO Publicity**

26. World Hydrography Day. The theme for World hydrography Day 2015 will concentrate on the fact that much of the world's seas, oceans and navigable waters remain unsurveyed. The tag-line for WHD2015 is

***“Our seas and waterways - yet to be fully charted and explored”***

The theme is intended to raise public awareness that, for example, there are higher resolution maps of the Moon and Mars than for many parts of our seas and coastal waters. The theme also provides the opportunity to promote and encourage innovative supplementary data gathering initiatives to address the current shortfall in useful bathymetric data, including crowd-sourcing and satellite derived bathymetry that were discussed at EIHC5. The theme also offers the opportunity to highlight both the missed opportunities and the potential risks involved in the continuing development of the blue economy and all other human-related activities taking place at sea, at a time when mankind still has a relatively limited knowledge of the nature and the shape of much of the seafloor and the hazards that lie upon it.

### **Action Requested of SWPHC Member States**

27. SWPHC Member States are invited to:

- a. **Note** this report.
- b. Where appropriate, **seek the assistance of the IHB or other Member States** to encourage the relevant government authorities to consider the approval of the pending Amendments to the IHO Convention.
- c. **Continue to provide** updates to S-11, through Australia as Chair of the International Charting Coordination Committee for Region L.
- d. **Invest** in the preparation of candidates for Capacity Building training.
- e. **Take any other actions** as considered appropriate.